

HÖLDERLIN AND THE ROMANTIC TRADITION

PAUL DE MAN

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

AMALIA HERRMANN &
JOHN NAMJUN KIM

This publication of Paul de Man's "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition" is a critical edition of a twenty-one-page typescript with de Man's handwritten corrections (henceforth the Princeton Typescript), located and identified by the editors in the archive of the *Quarterly Review of Literature* (QRL) at Princeton University Library. A fragment of an earlier draft of this essay was previously published in *Romanticism and Contemporary Criticism: The Gauss Seminar and Other Papers*, edited by E. S. Burt, Kevin Newmark, and Andrzej Warminski. The previously published fragment (RCC) corresponds roughly to the first twelve and a half pages of the Princeton Typescript and was based upon a seventeen-page manuscript archived in de Man's papers at the University of California, Irvine Libraries (Irvine Manuscript 1-17). In that archive, the present editors found an additional eight pages of the same draft manuscript (Irvine Manuscript 21-28), described in the finding aid as miscellaneous notes to de Man's essay "The Image of Rousseau in the Poetry of Hölderlin." Substantive differences between the Princeton Typescript and earlier versions—RCC and the two Irvine Manuscripts—are recorded in the notes of this critical edition. Though the proceeding edition of de Man's essay provides a fully developed and textually complete argument, the materials available in the ever-evolving archival corpus suggest that it is likely not the final version of "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition."

The Princeton Typescript was found among de Man's extensive correspondence with Theodore and Renée Weiss, then editors of the QRL at Bard College, where de Man had taught from 1949 to 1951.¹ The immediate occasion of their correspondence from early 1958 to late 1959—while de Man was a PhD candidate and Junior Fellow at the Society of Fellows at Harvard University—was the preparation of a special issue of the QRL on Friedrich Hölderlin, a figure then largely unknown to American readers. De Man's letters indicate that the Weisses had sought his assistance in finding an appropriate text by Martin Heidegger on Hölderlin to include in the special issue. De Man selected and

Amalia Herrmann is a lecturer in the Humanities Core Program, University of California, Irvine. John Namjun Kim is associate professor of comparative literature, University of California, Riverside.

translated Heidegger's 1936 essay "Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung," published in the journal as "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry."²

As de Man's letter of March 14, 1959 indicates, he had sent the Weisses the Princeton Typescript not as a submission for consideration in the Hölderlin issue of the *QRL* but merely to share recent work relevant to their editorial project. De Man writes to them about his paper:

It is something of a general introduction to Hölderlin called "H. and the Romantic Tradition," but as it is based on one poem (The Rhine) it would not be of any use to you, even if it were more carefully polished and less didactically written. But I thought you might be interested in it as an attempt to locate Hölderlin in relation to problems that are familiar to us in modern poetry—and also as an attempt to formulate some of those problems in a less negative language than I usually fall into.

The same letter indicates that the Princeton Typescript was written specifically as a public lecture—rather than as a finished article—which, he writes, "I gave at Brandeis this Winter." An announcement in the February 10, 1959 issue of the Brandeis student newspaper, *The Justice*, dates de Man's lecture as taking place that day, "sponsored by Le Cercle Français, the Lessingverein, and the Department of European Languages and Literature."

As the material conditions of scholarly labor in 1959 vastly differed from those of today, with the reprographic technologies affordable to a graduate student then largely limited to carbon copies and mimeographs, it seems unlikely that the typescript sent to the Weisses with de Man's handwritten corrections was the last version of "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition." More likely, the Princeton Typescript is a near-final version of the work, while another version that integrates de Man's handwritten corrections on the Princeton Typescript is now missing from or lost in the archive.

A four-page draft project description, also entitled "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition" and archived in his papers at the University of California, Irvine Libraries, suggests that this essay was at one point conceived as a part of a larger book project.³ The project description begins with a one-and-a-half-page survey on studies of romanticism and goes on to explain that his previous work on "later poetry . . . written between 1860 and 1920" (in his dissertation) made him "increasingly aware that the particular problems encountered here are not essentially different from that of romanticism." He continues, "For that reason, it seemed natural enough to entitle a study of the poetry of Mallarmé, Yeats and George which I intend to publish next year *The Post-romantic Predicament*." The reference to "next year," as well as other bibliographic references, strongly suggests that the project proposal was written around the time of his PhD conferral in 1961 or shortly thereafter, thus making it likely that a later version of his essay was retained for use in this project.

The project description suggests a wider scope for the examination of the romantic tradition. In reference to *The Post-romantic Predicament*, de Man writes:

In the conclusion of the book, I announce the necessity of returning to certain questions that emerge in the Western consciousness during the latter part of the 18th century and prevail until today. The present project tries to carry this out.

The final two pages of this proposal elaborate why his new project focuses on Hölderlin, whom he characterizes as “a poet whose very appurtenance to the ‘romantic tradition’ is a matter of debate,” and survey the state of Hölderlin studies in Germany before proceeding to the thematic outline of his project.

All that remains of this outline are its first two points: the first poses the question of the romantic poet’s relation to the historical events of his time, such as the “French Revolution, the Peace of Lunéville, Napoleonic wars”; the second proposes to examine “the deliberate attempt to incorporate the Hellenic as well as the Christian tradition as constitutive parts of a fully realized Western poetry.” This second point corresponds to a central theme examined in the Princeton Typescript. De Man’s notes sketched on the verso of page 3 of his project description—a list of four numbered points that begins with point 2—suggest the remainder of his projected study:

- (2) Hellenic – Greek fusion
- (3) philosophy – dialectic
- (4) Rousseau
- (5) imagery

Expanding on the subject of the Princeton Typescript, his project description sketches the course of study yet to be taken, a path on which the work keeps turning back, in pursuit of Hölderlin’s relation to Rousseau and to the romantic tradition.

The Princeton Typescript, along with editorial notes, is published here as a contribution to research not only on Hölderlin, Rousseau, and romanticism in general, but on de Man’s work itself as it transformed over the years and on his relationship to the multiple literary languages with which he worked. In this sense, the editorial principle in preparing the Princeton Typescript has been to preserve its orthography and punctuation, while only correcting obvious typographical errors. Deviations from linguistic or editorial norms, as long as they did not detract from the text, have been retained; where de Man’s quotations differ from their source texts, his versions are also retained and noted as such.

Effort was made to identify the editions of the texts de Man used for his quotations. In cases of uncertainty, widely available scholarly editions that he historically could have used—those prior to 1959—are cited in the notes. Unless otherwise stated, all notes are those of the editors. Nevertheless, the editors have drawn upon and benefitted from the scrupulous and insightful notes provided by the editors of RCC.

The editors express their gratitude to Ben Primer, Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University, for granting permission to quote the Princeton Typescript in full and to publish an accompanying facsimile page from the typescript; to Andrew Jones, Special Collections and Archives Coordinator at the University of California, Irvine Libraries, for his generous assistance during the edi-

tors' research; to Diane Brown, the Managing Editor of *diacritics*, for her meticulous editing and patient guidance throughout the production process; and especially to Patricia de Man for granting her permission to publish this edition of "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition." Above all, the editors are indebted to Cynthia Chase for her extensive editorial advice on this project. Any remaining errors or lapses in the text or the notes are the responsibility of the editors.

Paul de Man (standing) with Renée and Theodore Weiss, c. 1949. Courtesy of Patricia de Man.



Notes

1 Correspondence between de Man and the Weisses is archived in the *Quarterly Review of Literature Archives*, box 31, folder 22. Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

2 Martin Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," *Quarterly Review of Literature* 10, nos. 1 and 2 (1959): 79–94.

3 "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition," MS (Project Description). Paul de Man Papers, box 5, folder 23. Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries.

HÖLDERLIN AND THE ROMANTIC TRADITION

PAUL DE MAN

Paul de Man (1919–83) taught at Bard College, Cornell University, the University of Zurich, the Johns Hopkins University, and Yale University, where he was Sterling Professor of Humanities. His books include *Blindness and Insight* (1971) and *Allegories of Reading* (1979).

Very few of Hölderlin's works were published during his lifetime: some poems, the early novel *Hyperion* and two translations from Sophokles.¹ He received generous assistance from Schiller, but was rather icily dismissed by Goethe; his classmates from the Tübingen theological seminary, Hegel and Schelling, admired his poetic talent, but they had lost touch with him well before 1806, when he became insane and disappeared forever from the literary scene. Although his work and the myth of his existence were not entirely forgotten during the 19th century, it was not until 1923² that a reliable critical edition was established and that the poetry written between 1800 and 1806 became known with some degree of completeness.

Now, more than 150 years after the time it was written, Hölderlin's mature work receives more critical attention, in Europe, than that of any other poet. Four years ago,³ a completed poem of his, hitherto unknown, was discovered in London and, on this particular poem alone, there now exists a bibliography of over one hundred items.⁴ This is a staggering amount. Neither is the quality of this criticism inferior to its quantity. It is no exaggeration to say that the best philological and critical talent of Germany has been concerned, in the last twenty years, with the publication and interpretation of Hölderlin.⁵

Two questions at once arise: (1) Is this sudden outburst of interest in a single, long unknown poet, truly warranted? and (2) what has this intense critical effort accomplished; has it led to an increased understanding, to an acceptable interpretation of the work?

I will say very little about the first question. There are many reasons to be suspicious of the extraordinary vogue created around Hölderlin—a vogue which, inevitably, will sooner or later gain the United States in spite of the linguistic difficulties.⁶ His life his-

tory, like Rimbaud's, lends itself very easily to being made into a myth: that of the totally alienated and inward poet driven to insanity by utter solitude. The insanity introduces another ambiguous element and casts doubt on the intelligibility of the very difficult later poetry. (I am speaking only of that preceding the final breakdown of 1806; the poems written by Hölderlin after this date and of which several have been preserved and published are clinical as well as literary documents.) One can be attracted to Hölderlin for the wrong reasons, use him as an exterior pattern in which to transfer personal frustrations or anxieties, or attempt identifications which his own statement and poetic code would never tolerate. This is more dangerous still when it happens on a collective, national scale and when Hölderlin is seen as an incarnation of the destiny of Germany. He has written a poem called "Germanien" and used words such as "vaterländisch" and "nationell"—terms which acquire highly disturbing connotations as used by some in Germany around 1940.⁷ In a courageous article Croce published during the war in his review *Critica*, he gave voice to the protest of European liberalism against the exploitation of Hölderlin's name for nationalistic and political ends, and he also included a critical judgment that echoes Goethe's early rejection of Hölderlin as an excessively "subjective" poet.⁸ Nowadays, very few, even among Croce's disciples, would follow him in this evaluation, but his indictment of a messianic nationalism that claims Hölderlin as its example is still altogether valid. It is understandable that Croce's polemical intent, in the service of a good cause, blinded him to the quality of a poet who, more than any other, satisfied his criteria for supreme poetry as pure expression.⁹

Suspensions and misgivings about the motives behind the current Hölderlin vogue vanish at once at the contact of the work. It speaks for itself and, unless totally distorted, allows no room for subjective aberrations of any kind.¹⁰ It leaves the reader in contact with a poetry upon which no impure critical language can take hold. Whoever comes to Hölderlin for the wrong reasons will either have to change his reasons or change poets. Therefore, the entire problem of relative evaluation—which is itself a highly impure problem—should not retain us any longer. Evaluation is a corollary of a correct reading; the understanding of the poetry in itself is the only legitimate starting place.

This brings us to the second question: has the intensive study of Hölderlin during recent years yielded tangible results? As far as the all-important matter of a correct text is concerned, the answer is doubtlessly affirmative. The complete Hölderlin edition now in progress under the direction of Friedrich Beissner benefited from the research of earlier editors and improved on it.¹¹ When it will be completed, we will know Hölderlin's work more accurately and intimately than that of most poets. There remains room for disagreement on some points of detail but, on the whole,¹² recent commentators now

There are many reasons to be suspicious of the extraordinary vogue created around Hölderlin—a vogue which, inevitably, will sooner or later gain the United States in spite of the linguistic difficulties.

have a complete and reliable text at their disposal. One could have expected a parallel progress in the field of interpretation—but this progress has not taken place. If one compares earlier studies on Hölderlin, written without the benefit of a careful edition, with recent works, backed by Beissner's erudition and by years of research, one is forced to admit that most of the early questions have remained unanswered.¹³ We know with a considerable degree of accuracy what Hölderlin has written, but remain very ignorant as to the exact meaning of this poetry. The discrepancies and the confusion in Hölderlin criticism were dramatically illustrated on the recent occasion when the new poem I mentioned was discovered. The poem, entitled "Friedensfeier" (The Celebration of the Peace) is a finished version of a Hymn, fragments of which had been included in most editions. Its importance in Hölderlin interpretation became at once apparent. It is one of the most positive of his statements, in which he describes a certain relationship between man and the gods that holds a promise of peace and stability. A poem in which an oracular poet explicitly states and describes the ideal landscape towards which his work has been striving is naturally of great significance (even if one tends to think it inferior, poetically speaking, to the previously known fragments of the same hymn).¹⁴ Here was a wonderful opportunity for the interpreters to test their image of Hölderlin's ideal; up till now, they had been forced to reconstruct it from fragmentary passages. As it turns out, the interpretation of "Friedensfeier" hinges to a large extent on the identity of a figure to which Hölderlin does not allude by name; such figures, historical or mythological but always mythologized, often appear in Hölderlin's poetry, sometimes designated by name, sometimes by a descriptive epithet which can be transparent (*der Donnerer* for Zeus, *der Weingott* for Dionysos) or which can remain deliberately ambiguous. Here, the central figure is merely referred to as "Der Fürst des Festes, der Allbekannte"—the king of the feast, known to all. Because the epithet "Allbekannter" is used in a project for another hymn to designate Napoleon Bonaparte, the first interpreters of "Friedensfeier" took the King of the Feast to be the Emperor of France.¹⁵ Strong opposition arose at once against this reading. The editor of Hölderlin's works, Friedrich Beissner, tells us in the last volume to appear in the Stuttgart edition that the *Fürst des Festes* can only be the "Genius of the (German) people" (*Genius unsers Volks*).¹⁶ A third group of commentators, however, maintains that it can only be Christ himself. This "battle of the peace" as this controversy has come to be known, is inconclusive:¹⁷ the three proposed readings (Napoleon, the German national spirit or Christ) can all be defended and lead to a coherent reading of the poem. A decision can only be reached by reference to Hölderlin's general statement, as it emerges from the development of his entire work. The fact that at least three groups of perfectly competent and honest interpreters are not only unable to agree on the identity of a central symbol, but offer altogether incompatible readings, indicates that the fundamental significance of Hölderlin is not yet understood. It is of course perfectly normal that there would be divergences of interpretation, but in the case of such writers as Goethe, or Schiller, or Racine, or Shakespeare, there exists a common basis of agreement, an undisputed image shared by all commentators, whatever differences of method or opinion may otherwise separate them. No such common basis exists as yet for Hölderlin; the controversy over "Friedensfeier" revealed this very clearly.

We should ask ourselves why this is the case. Is it because Hölderlin has been the monopoly of a certain critical school which approached him with its particular prejudices and limitations? This can hardly be said. A recent Italian study by Alessandro Pellegrini gives a comprehensive survey of Hölderlin criticism up to 1955; almost inevitably, the book becomes a complete survey of critical methodology in Europe from 1920 to the present.¹⁸ Hölderlin studies have used the widest variety of approaches: purely objective and formal analysis of style, the subtler stylistic analysis of the school of Staiger; the conservative and erudite philology of Beissner; the mythological and Jungian criticism of Kerényi; the marxist criticism of Lukács; history of ideas of a Hegelian type (as in Korff) as well as of a neo-kantian and idealist type (as in Cassirer or Jaspers); the radical ontological poetics of Heidegger; the existential analyses of Rehm, Kommerell or Maurice Blanchot. The list could be continued, but it should suffice to indicate the considerable eclecticism that reigns in Hölderlin criticism. If the work remains problematic, it is not because of lack of variety or, for that matter, of talent, among its critics.

Would the difficulty not rather stem from Hölderlin's relationship to the tradition within which he is assumed to belong? However varied they may be, contemporary critical methods all originated within the poetic tradition of romanticism—using the term in a wide enough sense to encompass Novalis as well as Rilke, Blake as well as Yeats, Hugo¹⁹ as well as Valéry. It is natural that critical theory should evolve in conjunction with the dominant poetic trends of an era, even when it claims to oppose them. We are well used to such ironies of history as T. S. Eliot attacking romanticism in the name of "dissociation of sensibility,"²⁰ a concept which is itself one of the most characteristic intuitions of romanticism. Nor should the apparent objectivity of stylistic criticism blind us to the fact that it deliberately (and often consciously) takes for its object the formal attributes of romantic and post-romantic poetry: our interest in metaphor, for instance, can not be separated from the predominantly metaphorical structure of romantic poetry.²¹ It is therefore unavoidable that present-day critical methods, whether they be stylistic, historical or philosophical, are best suited to deal with the kind of literature that becomes predominant from the latter part of the 18th century on. Our question in relation to Hölderlin becomes then rather whether something in his poetry does not²² put him outside of this tradition. If this were the case, it would not be so surprising that present-day methods of literary interpretation fail to gain the fundamental insight which they can achieve for his contemporaries.²³

But does not Hölderlin appear to be the most romantic of all poets? It was his arch-romanticism²⁴ that Goethe was attacking when he described him as being "absolut und unter allen Umständen so subjektivisch, so überspannt, so einseitig"—absolute and in all circumstances so subjective, high-strung and lopsided.²⁵ If this image were correct, would then not modern criticism, derived as it is from romanticism and refined by its proximity to later romantic developments,²⁶ be particularly well suited to interpret Hölderlin? We can hope to find an answer only by examining Hölderlin's attitude towards the dominant romantic themes. I would like to make some suggestions as to the direction which such an inquiry would have to take.

>>

Most of the mythological figures that appear by name in Hölderlin's later elegies and hymns are of a divine nature: Dionysos, Herkules and Christ are the most prominent. Among the others, the most revealing for our purpose and the only literary name ever to appear is Rousseau. He was to be the subject of an unfinished ode that bears his name, and he appears in the center of the poem we will use for our text tonight: "Der Rhein."²⁷

The presence of Rousseau among Hölderlin's personal myths, and given semi-divine status, would certainly tend to confirm his affinity with romanticism. We think of Rousseau as the very source of the romantic sensibility; a human being deeply alienated from his present reality, who finds in the suffering resulting from this alienation the imaginative power to conceive an ideal image of unity and reconciliation. This image, moreover, is pantheistic in intent: the essence of unity resides in the natural object, and it is from the fictional memory of the experience of unity with nature, as it is said to exist in youth or in previous civilisations, that a premonition of permanent unity is gained.²⁸ The combination of those related characteristics: separation, pantheism and a temporal structure that moves from a remembered past to an ideal future,²⁹ defines for us Rousseau and the tradition that originates with Rousseau. The rebellious and revolutionary character of romanticism results from the original alienation, regardless of whether this alienation is from the self, from society or from nature itself. The temporal structure accounts for the particular combination of tones which is found in poets as distant in time and place

as Wordsworth and Rilke: the constant modulation from the elegiac, the regretful evocation of a unity and innocence that is lost, to the praise³⁰ of the hymn or, what amounts to the same thing, to the prophetic announcement that something worthy of praise is about to return. The ideal character of the future unity accounts for the totally inward or mythological language in

It is perhaps for this reason that we fail to notice how Hölderlin as well as Rousseau—or, at any rate, Hölderlin's conception of Rousseau—differ from this pattern.

which it must be expressed, since it can have nothing in common with what is presently real. And the pantheistic element appears in the very structure of the romantic image or metaphor, which is always a tension (and not a mere imitation or analogy) between a consciousness and a natural object, in which consciousness tries to achieve the status of being of the natural object without losing its status as a consciousness. The romantic image is always pastoral, in that its ideal resides in a state of nature, but it is always image, because it can only conceive of nature as of what is not in its present possession. It is a longing of the language towards nature, not an identity with nature. Therefore, it contains a constitutive element of tragic failure, because it originates from a conflict between two irreconcilable ways of being.

We associate, perhaps all too easily, such characteristics with Rousseau, with particular emphasis on the pantheistic element; but we should not forget that they survive

intact in later authors. The following passage from Yeats³¹ is one typical example among innumerable others; Yeats is contrasting his time with that of Spenser:

... a time when men in every land found poetry and imagination in one another's company and in the day's labor. [Our]³² stately goddesses ... belong to Shelley's thought and to the religion of the wilderness—the only religion possible to poetry today. Certainly Colin Clout, the companionable shepherd, and Calidor, the courtly man-at-arms, are gone, and Alastor is wandering from lonely river to river finding happiness in nothing but in that star where Spenser too had imagined the fountain of perfect things. This new beauty, in losing so much, has indeed found a new loftiness, a something of religious exaltation that the other had not. It may be that the goddesses, moving with a majesty like a procession of the stars, mean something to the soul of man that the old poets did not mean ... Has not the wilderness been at all times a place of prophecy?³³

It is all there: the separation and barrenness of the desert wasteland; the nostalgia for a time when the imagination was natural; the pantheistic nature-symbolism of stars and rivers; the exaltation of the prophetic tone.

Yeats was probably premature in referring to himself as the "last romantic,"³⁴ for there is little in the poetry of our century that can not be included within the broad framework of the romantic tradition. The themes have become so familiar that we take them for granted and tend to identify them with the very essence of poetry.

It is perhaps for this reason that we fail to notice how Hölderlin as well as Rousseau—or, at any rate, Hölderlin's conception of Rousseau—differ from this pattern. The poem you have in front of you, "Der Rhein," is highly revealing in this respect.³⁵ Like "Friedensfeier" it contains the promise of a reconciliation, in the form of a feast or celebration, in stanza 13

Dann feiern das Brautfest Menschen und Götter
Es feiern die Lebenden all
Und ausgeglichen
Ist eine Weile das Schicksaal.³⁶

The reconciliation follows immediately upon the appearance of Rousseau; it will again be possible when men will have become like Rousseau. The key to the poem then becomes Hölderlin's understanding of Rousseau. The literary allusion is clear enough; not even the most casual of editors could miss it: it is to the fifth *Réverie d'un promeneur solitaire* and to part XII of the *Confessions*, famous passages where Rousseau describes the happy and peaceful respite he found for a while, in the midst of his worst political difficulties, on an island located in the lake of Bielle;³⁷ Hölderlin mentions the lake in stanza 11. But if the source of the passage is clear, the interpretation is difficult, especially in the 11th stanza. To understand what Rousseau signifies to Hölderlin, we first have to relate the passage to the poem as a whole.

From the first stanza on, a double movement is apparent. The original position which the poet assigns to himself and which, as always in the late Hölderlin, is to be taken alto-

gether literally as well as symbolically, is itself a double situation: the golden noon of the sun is present as a giver of life, but on the other hand the poet has sought shelter in the darkest shade: "dunkeln Epheu" balances with "goldene Mittag," and this antithesis is itself the burden and the mystery of the poem. This static opposition very soon becomes a movement towards two contrasted directions: the poet's soul drifts "towards Italy and Morea's shores,"³⁸ Hölderlin's paraphrase for the Roman and Hellenic world of Antiquity, but, in the emphatic "jetzt" that begins the second stanza, this movement is checked at once by another entity which does not belong to the Hellenic world at all but is part of the poet's own, national landscape: the German river Rhine. We are at the point of extreme tension between those two forces, the one moving to the East in the direction of the world of Antiquity, the other to the West to the German cities of the Rhineland. This point is called the source (geographically the source of the stream) and the line, which is also the actual course of the river, graphically represents the destiny, the particular "Schicksal"³⁹ of man in Hölderlin's time and place.

The Rhine, we are told, is the noblest of rivers; it is born free and sets itself apart from its two brothers (the Rhône and the Tessin) in being royal (*königlich*) and in aspiring to different, higher hopes. This intrinsic superiority marks its destiny in a very specific way: the Rhine—and this is an actual fact of geography—begins its course by flowing, not to the West, but to the East; it is "driven impatiently towards Asia,"⁴⁰ in a movement that parallels the attraction of the poet's mind towards Greece in the first stanza. At this point, the poem pauses and the description is interrupted by a meditative passage (*Doch unverständlich ist das Wünschen . . .*⁴¹), exactly as the Sophoklean tragedy pauses at the moment of highest dramatic intensity and interrupts the action with a reflective chorus. This is the unmistakable sign that we have reached a moment in the development that requires pause and reflection. What is the meaning of the Rhine's impatient impulse towards the East?

The analogy with the poet's longing for Greece in the first stanza suggests an answer. Greece is, of course, a dominant theme throughout Hölderlin's work and, as is often the case in German neo-hellenism, it is the elegiac theme par excellence. It appears in this form in the earlier novel *Hyperion* as well as in the large elegies of the middle period: "Archipelagus," "Brod und Wein," and others. The line from Goethe's *Iphigenie*

Das Land der Griechen mit der Seele suchend⁴²

certainly applies to a large fraction of Hölderlin's work—as it does to so many of his contemporaries. In Hölderlin, however, the myth of Greece is given a more specific content: his contact with Greek poetry was much closer than Goethe's or Schiller's, and his translations of Pindar and Sophokles are a high moment in the poetic dialogue between the Greek and the modern Western world. Hölderlin has a conscious knowledge of the Hellenic mind as it is, and therefore Greece is not to him a purely ideal realm; his later relationship towards Greece is not elegiac or imitative but dialectical, in the sense that the modern attraction towards the specific virtue of the Greeks is counterbalanced by a Greek attraction towards the specific virtue of the West. Greece and the West are op-

posed and distinct in their essence; the attraction of Greece on Western man is not that of something intrinsically superior and desirable but of something essentially *other*, possessing a virtue which he does not possess, but lacking in *his* specific virtue. Naturally, we long for what we do not have and scorn what is already in our possession; it is in the essence of the dialectic to give ideal status to the negation of the self, until sufficient consciousness is reached to see both the self and the other within their proper distinction.

In one of his latest texts, the commentaries on the translation of the *Antigone*, Hölderlin defines the specific Greek virtue very clearly: the Greek poetic language is aimed towards an actual, natural object and it is capable of reaching it, of hitting its mark, so to speak; it reaches the object that it names—Hölderlin uses the expression “etwas treffen”⁴¹—with the same accuracy with which the Greek athlete reaches his aim, or the warrior’s spear his enemy; in a tragic context, the word can literally kill the body at which it is aimed, as Kreon’s word kills Antigone. The word is immediately present to the signified natural object; it captures nature and holds it in its possession. The pantheistic longing of the moderns, lamenting their separation from nature, is inconceivable to the Greeks as a poetic theme.⁴² On the other hand, however, they lack the self-reflective power which enables modern man to know his own consciousness. Their nostalgia, corresponding to our elegiac treatment of nature, is best apparent in the choral question that keeps recurring in the early tragedians as they lament their ignorance of man’s existence; the first ode of the *Antigone* at the beginning of Act II, magnificently translated by Hölderlin, would be a striking instance

In a tragic context, the word can literally kill the body at which it is aimed, as Kreon’s word kills Antigone.

Polla ta deina kouden an-
thrōpou deinoteron pelei.⁴³

Ungeheuer ist viel. Doch nichts
Ungeheurer als der Mensch.⁴⁴

(in which *Ungeheuer* is much superior for “deina” to the usual English translation as “wonderful”)⁴⁵

To use Schiller’s language, we must imagine within the “naive” Greek a “sentimental” longing for consciousness of self as strong as the modern “sentimental” longing towards nature.⁴⁶

With this in mind we can interpret the movement of the Rhine near its source, as it first flows eastward and then turns back upon itself to flow towards the West. If the movement toward Asia is like the neo-Hellenic nostalgia towards Greece, it is equivalent to the pantheistic ideal that longs for the immediate possession of the natural object which the Greek language achieves without effort. This is a familiar romantic theme and not in itself unusual; the difference, however, resides in the place which Hölderlin assigns to this movement in the total development. The traditional romantic symbol for

unity is the sea, where all rivers mingle in the common All. Hölderlin uses this image in early works; the following quotation from *Hyperion* is an instance of a purely pantheistic sea-symbol:

To be one with all that lives, to forget one's own self in the return to the all of nature, that is the highest thought, the supreme joy.⁴⁹ It is a state of eternal rest, where noon loses its torrid heat and the thunder its voice, where the stormy sea is like the surge of the wheat field.⁵⁰

To the romantic mind, the sea as pantheistic unity is the final consummation of all individual destinies, the endpoint of the quest. In the Rhine poem, however, the sea is not even mentioned and the last glimpse we are given of the river is as it flows through the cities and under the towers of civilised Europe. The pantheistic drive does not occur at the end, as the culmination of the destiny, but at the beginning, at the source: it is the initial moment in a movement that will soon reverse itself. Pantheism is only the first stage in the destiny of the Western mind.

With great strength, Hölderlin asserts that it is the presence of this stage which reveals the superiority of the Rhine over the other rivers: those who have not felt this urge do not have the same claim to freedom and nobility. The entire subsequent movement will be in the other direction, away from Greece, but if it had not been for the initial attraction towards the Hellenic form of virtue, the Rhine's power to create a non-Hellenic, national world would never have existed. However, if the movement towards Greece had been allowed to continue unchecked, it would have grown from mere rebellion into pure hybris. It is violent and destructive, like the stream near its source is savage, undaunted. In its desperate desire to possess a nature which it can never reach, it tears and destroys—⁵¹

wie der Blitz, muss er
Die Erde spalten, und wie Bezauberte fliehn
Die Wälder ihm nach und zusammensinkend die Berge.⁵²

It is not really within the power of the Rhine itself, as the entity possessed of the particular destiny of the Western world, to reverse this original direction. It takes the intervention of a higher divine power which controls the half-god Rhine much as the Greek destiny or *moira* dominates divine and human power in the *Iliad*. The intervention of this power, merely designated as "a God" bends the Rhine back in the other direction and forces it away from its desire to escape from what it is (the spirit of the West), back into its actual destiny and its own being. To the Rhine itself,⁵³ this merciful intervention must appear unbearable, a tragic death and defeat, the most difficult sacrifice of all.⁵⁴ In this poem, concerned with the mystery of origin ("Ein Rätsel ist reinentsprungenes . . .")⁵⁵ rather than with the mystery of the return upon oneself, this decisive moment is given little development and is not seen, so to speak, from the point of view of the river. We see the Rhine in its youthful violence as it races toward Asia; we see the intervention of the god and then suddenly, almost without transition, the mature Vater Rhein fulfilling its destiny far away from its source among the cities of Europe (stanza 6). At other places

in his work, however, Hölderlin has given insight into the nature of this reversal, which he calls "vaterländische Umkehr,"⁵⁶ the return towards one's own nation. In the same commentary to the *Antigone*, for instance, he comments on the highest moment in the destiny of the heroine Antigone,⁵⁷ which is such a moment of "Umkehr." It takes place at the beginning of the third act when Antigone's fate has been sealed; all attempts to intervene for her have failed and she knows her choice to be one of death. At that moment, she likens herself to Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus who was changed into a stone by Artemis and Apollo. Here is the passage in a modern English translation:

How often I have heard the story of Niobe,
Tantalos' wretched daughter, how the stone
Clung fast about her, ivy-close: and they say
The rain falls endlessly
And sifting soft snow; her tears are never done.
I feel the loneliness of her death in mine.⁵⁸

In Hölderlin, the passage goes:

Ich habe gehört, der Wüste gleich sei worden
Die Lebensreiche, Phrygische,
Von Tantalos im Schosze gezogen, an Sipylos Gipfel;
Höckricht sei worden die und, wie eins Efeuketten
Antut, in langsamen Fels
Zusammen gezogen; und, immerhin bei ihr,
Wie Männer sagen, bleibt der Winter;
Und waschet den Hals ihr unter
Schneehellen Tränen der Wimpern. Recht der gleich
Bringt mich ein Geist zu Bette.⁵⁹

Niobe is, according to Hölderlin, the true image of the Hellenic genius and thus Antigone's decision to be like Niobe is the return upon herself by means of which she assumes the true, national Greek status. The most specifically Greek of all acts is that one by which a human being chooses to become the object it can reach, becomes earth or rock, the most solidly plastic and opaque of all substances. Nostalgic as the Greek always is for the transparency and the fluidity of the Spirit, he becomes entirely himself when he renounces this nostalgia and accepts his inborn, native ability to be rock and earth. The superiority of the Greeks over us does not reside in the fact that they are capable of experiencing pantheistic unity which, for us, is bound to remain unreachable and ideal; they can only do so because they lack the consciousness of self which we possess in a high degree. Their superiority, however, is that they have dared, like Antigone daring to become Niobe, to be totally what they are instead of trying to become what they are not. The human figure daring to be stone, such is the supreme Greek achievement; it is natural, therefore, that Greek permanence should be sealed forever in the marble statues left by their sculptors, more still than in their poetry. Contrary to Greece, the

West has not yet dared to make this return upon itself. The entire history of the West is a nostalgic longing for the virtue of Greece and Christianity a vast elegy on the death of Greece. Christ, for Hölderlin, is the last of the Greek gods, the brother of Herkules and Dionysos, and His death, the starting point of Western history, marks the beginning of the violent era during which, like the Rhine near its source, the Western mind strives in vain for the kind of unity it has lost forever. In Hölderlin's and in our own time, which is still the same, this necessary attempt has reached the point of highest danger, where the destructions wreaked by history must, as it is said of the Rhine "split the earth, as by a flash of lightning." For that reason, Hölderlin's poetry becomes essentially a poetry of warning. If the West is to fulfill itself completely, it has to make the return upon its own national self. The Rhine is the symbol of this completed course of the Western destiny. But for us, whose destiny is still incomplete, who are still near the source, in extreme danger and faced with Antigone's tragic decision to relinquish our nostalgia, the symbol has to be that of an actual, historical and contemporary man. This man is Rousseau. He had the premonition of a specifically Western destiny and therefore carries within him the promise of a new reconciliation.⁶⁰

We can now see the analogy between Rousseau's destiny and that of the Rhine. The transition from the river to the thinker is brought about very slowly, almost imperceptibly, in stanza 8. In 7, we are still with the Rhine and Hölderlin speaks of the⁶¹ necessary peril of hybris near the source. At the end of stanza 8, he addresses the "dreamer" (*der Schwärmer*) who cannot endure "inequality" (*Ungleiches*). "Ungleiches" (here erroneously translated as "distinctions")⁶² is the term that makes the transition to Rousseau: it alludes to the title of his early work *De l'origine de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* which, more than any other of his writings has helped to prepare the French Revolution. Rousseau's political ideal of equality appears as the most modern form of the pantheistic

longing⁶³ for unity with the natural object. His idyllic picture of primitive equality is a powerful pastoral myth, powerful enough to have determined the course of history ever since.⁶⁴ It is equivalent to the drive

We can now see the analogy between
Rousseau's destiny and that of the Rhine.

of the Rhine eastward, equally necessary but equally dangerous: it leads Rousseau, in stanza 8, "to break his own house," "to curse what he loves most" and "to bury himself and his own child under the ruins," events descriptive of the historical upheavals that swept Europe in the wake of the egalitarian ideal. The most dangerous consequences of Rousseau's message appear in stanza 10, where a distinction is made between the necessary danger inherent in the violence of all thought at its source and a different threat: original thought being misused by those base in soul (*die entweihenden Knechte*) who, in their blindness, undertake to destroy the source itself:⁶⁵ the rabble that threw stones at Rousseau and forced him to flee⁶⁶ or, on the historical level, the Terreur that corrupted the French Revolution.

Posterity has primarily remembered this picture of Rousseau, as the first to give political content to the pantheistic ideal. It is as such that he appears to be the very founder

of romanticism. But Rousseau is seen here in a different perspective, reaching well beyond the youthful impulse of the *Treatise on Inequality*. Stanza 11 evokes the Rousseau of the *Rêveries* and of the end of the *Confessions*, a Rousseau as purely Western as Antigone is Greek after her choice for the destiny of Niobe. This new Rousseau is described by a specific mythological allusion to Herkules: he is the man who carried the heaven on his shoulders. This identifies him as the guide of the [links him closely to the]⁶⁷ West, since we know that Herkules had to carry the sky on his neck (*hac caelum cervice tuli*)⁶⁸ to gain the Golden Apples of the Hesperides, the land of the West and of the evening (*Abendland*). What is meant by this symbolical action at the core of the poem, Rousseau heaving the heaven on his shoulders?⁶⁹

The three first lines of stanza 11 set up an antithesis between the image of Heaven and that of Earth, and Rousseau's situation is contrasted with that of the "sons of the Earth."⁷⁰ He has to labour under the weight of heaven, while they are easily received by their mother, the Earth. Earth is called the All, in a clear allusion to the pantheist motto One in All (*Hen kai pan*). The "sons of the Earth" are the Greeks, who, like Niobe, can become one with the rock. In contrast to them, Rousseau is the man turned in the opposite direction: not towards the *Pan* of earth and nature, but towards the translucent and mobile heavens of human consciousness and existence, as they oppose to material substance. The essence of Unity, which Western man had always placed in the natural object, becomes for Rousseau located in man's consciousness of himself as existent. The entire tradition of Rousseau criticism goes in the other direction and Hölderlin's interpretation appears as highly unorthodox. It is founded, however, on a passage from the fifth *Réverie*, which throws a great deal of light on this conception of Rousseau.⁷¹ Rousseau writes (and I quote him in French because the passage translates so poorly; I will repeat the concluding sentences in English):

Mais s'il est un état où l'âme trouve une assiette assez solide pour s'y reposer tout entière, et rassembler là tout son être, sans avoir besoin de rappeler le passé, ni d'enjamber sur l'avenir, où le temps ne soit rien pour elle, où le présent dure toujours, sans néanmoins marquer sa durée et sans aucune trace de succession, sans aucun autre sentiment de privation ni de jouissance, de plaisir ni de peine, de désir ni de crainte, que celui seul de notre existence, et que ce sentiment seul puisse la remplir tout entière; tant que cet état dure, celui qui s'y trouve peut s'appeler heureux, non d'un bonheur imparfait, pauvre et relatif, tel que celui qu'on trouve

Posterity has primarily remembered this picture of Rousseau, as the first to give political content to the pantheistic ideal. It is as such that he appears to be the very founder of romanticism. But Rousseau is ^{seen here} ~~placed in this~~ poem in a different perspective, reaching well beyond the youthful impulse of the *Treatise on Inequality*. Stanza 11 evokes the Rousseau of the *Réveries* and of the end of the *Confessions*, a Rousseau as purely Western as Antigone is Greek after her choice for the destiny of Niobe. This new Rousseau is described by a specific mythological allusion to Herkules: he is the man who carried the heaven on his shoulders. This ^{Rousseau's here as the guide of the} ~~links him closely to the~~ West, since we know that Herkules had to carry the sky on his neck ~~as~~ (*hac caelum cervice tuli*) to gain the Golden Apples of the Hesperides, the land of the West and of the evening (*Abendland*). ~~But what~~ ^{is} meant by this symbolical action at the core of the poem, Rousseau heaving ^{the} heaven on his shoulders?

Figure 1. "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition," typescript, page 16. Courtesy of the Princeton University Library.

dans les plaisirs de la vie, mais d'un bonheur suffisant, parfait et plein, qui ne laisse dans l'âme aucun vide qu'elle sente le besoin de remplir. Tel est l'état où je me suis trouvé souvent à l'île de Saint-Pierre, dans mes rêveries solitaires, soit couché dans mon bateau que je laissais dériver au gré de l'eau, soit assis sur les rives du lac agité, soit ailleurs, au bord d'une belle rivière ou d'un ruisseau murmurant sur le gravier.⁷²

De quoi jouit-on dans une pareille situation? *De rien d'extérieur à soi, de rien sinon de soi-même et de sa propre existence*; tant que cet état dure, on se suffit à soi-même, comme Dieu. Le sentiment de l'existence dépouillé de toute autre affection est par lui-même un sentiment précieux de contentement et de paix, qui suffirait seul pour rendre cette existence chère et douce à qui saurait écarter de soi toutes les impressions sensuelles et terrestres qui viennent sans cesse nous en distraire, et en troubler ici-bas la douceur.

He describes moments of perfect happiness he has known and asks:

What is it that one enjoys at those moments? Nothing outside of oneself, nothing but oneself and one's own existence;⁷³ as long as this state lasts, one is self-sufficient like God. The feeling of existence stripped of all other emotions is in itself a priceless feeling of peace and satisfaction, sufficient to make this life worthwhile for whoever is able to put aside all the earthly sense impressions which never cease to distract us, and to disturb our peace.⁷⁴

Lest one misread⁷⁵ this passage, the enjoyment of the self which is described here has nothing narcissistic:⁷⁶ Narcisse's contemplation is precisely the contemplation of the self as a natural object and enjoyment of the spirit as if it were a material substance: it is the most extreme form of the romantic theme. But Rousseau is not contemplating his own reflection; he is staring at the sky, where all has lost the density of earth and matter and acquired the total mobility of consciousness. From the most exalted of ideals, nature has become a mere setting, a circumstance which is helpful but not vital to the self-contemplation of existence: "Cette espèce de rêverie peut se goûter partout où l'on peut

être tranquille; et j'ai souvent pensé qu'à la Bastille, et même dans un cachot où nul objet n'eût frappé ma vue, j'aurais encore pu rêver agréablement."⁷⁷ Hölderlin's poetic version of the fifth *Rêverie*, in stanza 11 and 12, has a great deal of nature in it, but

Standing at the beginning of the romantic tradition, Hölderlin also points beyond it, away from it.

the function of the nature imagery is by no means pantheistic (as it was in the passage from *Hyperion* previously quoted):⁷⁸ it becomes a mere setting, neither overpowering nor stirring, but which is simply the restful landscape of his native land. The emphasis is entirely on shade, coolness, sunset and evening, the climate analogous to the life of the ordered mind as well as to the landscape of the Western land of Evening as opposed to the sun-drenched land of Morning. Only in such a landscape can the feast of reconciliation between the gods and Western man be conceived.

Hölderlin thus describes Rousseau and himself in a manner which puts them beyond the romantic tradition, certainly not in the sense that they mark a return to pre-romantic Christian or neo-classical ideals, but in a manner which it is still very difficult for us to grasp. The neo-Hellenic or the idyllic moment, which contain the essence of romanticism, are indispensable components of the total experience of the Western mind: they are the very source of this experience.⁷⁹ But Western art at its highest point will no longer be romantic, though it is impossible for us to imagine how it will be. Hölderlin himself is not the poet of this truly nationally Western art, but rather the poet of the *Umkehr*, of the movement by which the romantic sensibility turns away from its original ideal. He states his own situation with great precision: he is near the source, as he says in the first lines of the poem, but in the shade of the dark ivy.⁸⁰ The sun is at the zenith of noon, at the same distant from East and West, and the attraction of Greece is still at its highest—but the choice of the shade indicates that he has begun the return. Standing at the beginning of the romantic tradition, Hölderlin also points beyond it, away from it.

We are powerless to imagine the characteristics of an art that would not be an expression of unity in nature, whether actual or ideal.⁸¹ One word that recurs more and more often in the late Hölderlin contains some indication: it is the word *Maass*. *Maass* means balance, the proper balance between things human and things divine, but it also means measurement.⁸² For us, as was spontaneously the case for the Greeks, measurement means primarily geo-metry, the measurement of the earth, and the most nostalgically Hellenic and, for that reason, the most dangerous of all our actions is the scientific measurement of matter, the truly Western form of hybris.⁸³ In a Western world after the *Umkehr*,⁸⁴ measurement would no longer be of matter but of the substance of the mind, the logos. Measured language means poetry, and we can assume that the supreme form of Western art will be poetic, as the supreme form of Greek art had to be plastic. But the metrics of Western poetry will be different from the kind of metrics we know and which treat language still primarily as if it were a material substance, made of sound and measurable time. What strikes us as the most strange and alien in the extreme rhythmical complication of the late Hölderlin hymns may be a foreboding of this "architectonic of heaven,"⁸⁵ as he called it, which it remains for Western poetry to invent.

In none of the great poets after Hölderlin,⁸⁶ Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Yeats, George, can such characteristics be said to be prominent, and the more recent poetry seems more than ever haunted by the fascination of objects. Still, one finds here and there thematic developments, or descriptions for which it is difficult to account in terms of the romantic tradition.⁸⁷ I think, for instance, of what happens to the national theme in Yeats, beginning as a pastoral, Arcadian myth but becoming—although the traditional allegiance is retained as a pseudo-conviction—more and more a mere present setting, devoid of any sentimental "value," a clear and precise light not unlike Hölderlin's, except that it is as Irish as Hölderlin's landscape is Suabian. A passage like the following is given an elaborate emblematic meaning within the poem in which it appears; taken out of context, however, it merely records the presence of the Irish light and countryside:

The horse that comes from the road,
 The rider, the birds that range
 From cloud to tumbling cloud,
 Minute by minute they change;
 A shadow of cloud on the stream
 Changes minute by minute;
 A horse-hoof slides on the brim,
 And a horse splashes⁸⁸ within it;
 The long-legged moor-hens dive,
 And hens to moor-cocks call . . .⁸⁹

Or take the details⁹⁰ (again, not the function) of the following

Once more the storm is howling, and half hid
 Under this cradle-hood and coverlid
 My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle
 But Gregory's wood and one bare hill
 Whereby the haystack and roof-levelling wind,
 Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;⁹¹

Or I think of a short poem by Rimbaud, which is thematically baffling if read as a romantic poem. In a landscape of meadows and rivers, it describes the poet's craving for matter, the sensation of his unappeased thirst. Then, when water suddenly becomes abundantly available, he simply refuses to take it, with no other indication of the difficulty of his decision than the title of the poem "Larme"

Loin des oiseaux, des troupeaux, des villageoises,
 Je buvais, accroupi dans quelque bruyère
 Entourée de tendres bois de noisetiers,
 Par un brouillard d'après-midi tiède et vert.

Que pouvais-je boire dans cette jeune Oise,
 Ormeaux sans voix, gazon sans fleurs, ciel couvert.
 Que tirais-je à la gourde de colocase ?
 Quelque liqueur d'or, fade et qui fait suer.

Tel, j'eusse été mauvaise enseigne d'auberge.
 Puis l'orage changea le ciel, jusqu'au soir.
 Ce furent des pays noirs, des lacs, des perches,
 Des colonnades sous la nuit bleue, des gares.

L'eau des bois se perdait sur des sables vierges.
 Le vent, du ciel, jetait des glaçons aux mares . . .
 Or ! tel qu'un pêcheur d'or ou de coquillages,
 Dire que je n'ai pas eu souci de boire !⁹²

The gesture with which Rimbaud turns away from what he seemed most to crave is the same movement that appears in the course of the Rhine as it turns Westward, or in Rousseau when, protected from the invasion of natural things, he finds happiness in the pure presence of his own existence. It is the movement of the *Umkehr*, and indicates that, however alien Hölderlin's poetry and thought may now appear, they are not altogether unique, but one among the first signs of a possible, future poetry.

Notes

- 1 The title does not appear on the typescript. Substantive differences between the Princeton Typescript and the previous draft, whether in the published RCC or in the Irvine Manuscript, are noted below. Hölderlin's orthography for the names of classical figures in this lecture, whence "Sophokles," "Herkules," and "Kreon" among others.
- 2 The editors of RCC note, "De Man had written '1920?' but clearly was referring to the Hellingrath/Seebald/Pigenot edition in six volumes" (205n1).
- 3 "Friedensfeier," to which de Man refers, was discovered in 1954 and published the same year in an edition by Friedrich Beißner.
- 4 In RCC: "fifty items" (123).
- 5 In RCC, this sentence is followed by, "The leading schools of Europe have devoted a great amount of work to Hölderlin and, in some cases, they have originated in contact with this work" (123).
- 6 The phrase, "in spite of the linguistic difficulties," does not appear in RCC (124).
- 7 De Man appears to refer to his contemporaries' critical interest in the relationship between the terms *vaterländisch* and *nationell* in Hölderlin's letters to Casimir Ulrich Böhlendorff on December 4, 1801 (Große Stuttgarter Ausgabe, or the "large" Stuttgart edition, henceforth GStA, 6.1:425–28) and in late November 1802 (GStA, 6.1:432–33). In the commentary on Hölderlin's letters in the GStA, editor Adolf Beck claims that the word "nationell" in the 1801 letter is equivalent to the phrase "vaterländisch and natural, authentically original" (*vaterländisch und natürlich, eigentlich originell*) in the 1802 letter (GStA, 6.2:1077). See also notes 9 and 80.
- 8 The editors of RCC provide the bibliographic reference for Croce's article (205n3). Croce's article is characterized as a "polemic" in Pellegrini, *Hölderlin: Storia della critica*, 377, and in the expanded German
- 9 In RCC, this sentence and the following appear within parentheses: "I will have to come back later to what 'national' means in Hölderlin's poetry, and it should then be clear that it has nothing in common with the extreme forms of twentieth-century nationalism" (124). De Man returns to this aspect of his argument in the Irvine Manuscript (21–28). See note 80.
- 10 In RCC, this sentence continues with the clause, "as little as does the music of Bach or the painting of Piero della Francesca" (125).
- 11 In RCC, this sentence is followed by this passage: "Thanks to this edition, we have come to know Hölderlin's work more closely and intimately than that of most poets. (Precisely because so few of the writings were published during the poet's lifetime, the editor had to give us what practically amounts to a facsimile of the manuscripts, with a detailed description of all variants, handwritten corrections, revisions, and the like. The philological difficulties of establishing a correct critical edition of a work that exists only in manuscript are considerable. There are passages, even in Beissner's very careful edition, where room remains for disagreement and doubt. But on the other hand, whatever doubts remain, the difficulties are never caused by exterior causes—as is the case, for instance, in a writer like Diderot, whose clandestine works were often altered and disguised for obvious political reasons. Hölderlin's innumerable variants and rewritings always indicate changes and evolutions of his own mind or technique; they are therefore themselves a very fruitful source for interpretation)" (125).

12 This passage, "When it will be completed . . . on the whole," does not appear in RCC, which instead begins a new paragraph with, "Recent commentators thus have had access to a reliable text" (125).

13 In RCC, this sentence reads, "If one compares an early work on Hölderlin, written without the benefit of a careful edition, such as the thesis by Böhm which dates from 1902, with recent works, backed up by Beissner's erudition and by thirty years of research, one is forced to admit that most of the early questions have remained unanswered" (126). The editors of RCC supply the reference to Böhm, *Studien zu Hölderlins Empedokles* (206n5).

14 This parenthetical remark does not appear in RCC. In the Princeton Typescript, it is partially crossed out, reading originally, "(even if one tends to agree, as I do, with some who do not consider this poem as one of Hölderlin's greatest and inferior, poetically speaking, to the fragments of the same hymn that were previously known)."

15 In RCC, this sentence is followed by, "The main proponent of this thesis is a Swiss philologist, a pupil of Staiger and disciple of Heidegger, Bodo Allemann" (126).

16 GStA, 3:556. The phrase is originally from Hölderlin's "An die Deutschen" (GStA, 2:1:10). In RCC, this sentence is followed by, "It may be pointed out in passing that it is not a good sign when the authoritative notes to the monumental critical edition of a poet have to be written in the tone of a polemical article" (127).

17 The phrase "battle of the peace" (*Streit um den Frieden*) is the title of Eduard Lachmann's 1957 edited volume, *Der Streit um den Frieden. Beiträge zur Auseinandersetzung um Hölderlins "Friedensfeier."*

18 The editors of RCC supply the bibliographic reference to Pellegrini's study, *Hölderlin: Storia della critica*, and its 1965 expanded German translation, *Friedrich Hölderlin: Sein Bild in der Forschung* (205n2).

19 "Nerval" is crossed out and replaced with "Hugo."

20 Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," 247.

21 In RCC, this sentence is followed by the parenthetical remark, "(It is because of our romantic heritage that we are able to gain insight into the nature of metaphorical language in baroque and Renaissance literature)" (128).

22 De Man adds "not" by hand.

23 In RCC, this sentence is followed by, "The irreducible difficulty of Hölderlin would then be that his poetry contains something essentially different from what we have come to take for granted in poetry, and we could only penetrate into this world by understanding the nature of the difference" (129).

24 In RCC: "hyperromanticism" (129).

25 The editors of RCC note, "De Man's quotation is not from Goethe but rather from Schiller's letter to Goethe (August 17, 1797). This passage of the letter is quoted in Pellegrini, *Hölderlin*, 15" (206n6).

26 In RCC, this prepositional phrase reads, "to such late romantic developments as symbolism (surrealism or expressionism)" (129).

27 Hölderlin, "Der Rhein," in GStA, 2:1:149–56. De Man hereafter refers to "Der Rhein" by stanza number.

28 In RCC, the final clause reads, "and it is from the remembered experience of unity with nature as it exists in youth or in earlier civilizations that we gain a premonition of the state of permanent unity toward which we strive" (129–30).

- 29 In RCC: "ideal and fictional future" (130).
- 30 A parenthetical gloss of the word "praise" (*Rühmen*), appears in RCC (130).
- 31 The phrase, "written in 1902," appears in RCC (130).
- 32 All square brackets in the body of the essay are de Man's.
- 33 Yeats, "Edmund Spenser," 469–70. De Man's quotation modifies the passage slightly, omitting the phrase "those kindly women of" before "the old poets."
- 34 Yeats, "Coole Park and Ballylee, 1931," in *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*, 491.
- 35 As the language of de Man's lecture suggests that a handout containing Hamburger's 1952 verse translation of "Der Rhein" was given to his Brandeis audience—"The poem you have in front of you . . ."—the following notes draw from the Hamburger translation wherever de Man quotes "Der Rhein" without an accompanying translation. ("Der Rhein" / "The Rhine," in *Hölderlin: His Poems*, 196–209.)
- 36 "Then gods and men rejoice at the bridal feast, / All the living rejoice, / And Fate for a while / Is levelled" (*Hölderlin: His Poems*, 207). The varying orthography and punctuation of de Man's quotations of "Der Rhein" throughout (e.g., here, *Schicksaal* but later, *Schicksaal*) suggest that de Man used two editions of Hölderlin's works edited by Beißner: the *Große Stuttgarter Ausgabe* and the "small" Stuttgart edition, the *Kleine Stuttgarter Ausgabe*, henceforth KStA.
- 37 In French, the lac de Bienne; in German, the Bielersee.
- 38 A modification of Hamburger's translation, "Towards Italy and far to Morea's shores" (*Hölderlin: His Poems*, 197).
- 39 In RCC: "the particular moira (*Schicksaal*)" (132).
- 40 A modification of Hamburger's translation, "Impatiently drove toward Asia" (*Hölderlin: His Poems*, 199).
- 41 In GStA, this passage reads, "Doch unverstän- dig ist / Das Wünschen" (2.1: 143; st. 3); "But . . . / Wishing is foolish" (*Hölderlin: His Poems*, 199).
- 42 "Seeking with the soul the land of the Greeks" (Goethe, *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, 3).
- 43 "Anmerkung zur Antigone," KStA, 5:294.
- 44 In RCC, this sentence concludes with the parenthetical remark, "(Hölderlin is referring to Homer, not to the later Greece of Theocritus)" (134).
- 45 "Many things are formidable, and none more formidable than man!" (Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. Lloyd-Jones, lines 332–33).
- 46 *Hölderlin's Werke*, 811 and KStA, 5:238. Brieger's one-volume *Hölderlin's Werke* is the edition de Man recommended to students in his 1958 Harvard course on Keats, Hölderlin, and Nerval (de Man, "CL 159"). See also note 59.
- 47 This parenthetical remark does not appear in RCC. In the Fitts and Fitzgerald translation used by de Man, the passage reads, "Numberless are the world's wonders, but none / More wonderful than man" (23). The translation of *deina* and *deinoteron* as "wonders" and "more wonderful" can be traced back to Richard Claverhouse Jebb's 1888 translation, in which the passage reads, "Wonders are many, and none is more wonderful than man" (lines 332–33).
- 48 See Schiller, "Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung."
- 49 Omitted here is the clause continuing this sentence, "das ist die heilige Bergeshöhe" (that is the sacred mountain heights).

50 This translation appears to be by de Man. Hölderlin's original reads, "Eines zu seyn mit Allem, was lebt, in seeliger Selbstvergessenheit wiederzukehren in's All der Natur, das ist der Gipfel der Gedanken und Freuden, das ist die heilige Bergeshöhe, der Ort der ewigen Ruhe, wo der Mittag seine Schwüle und der Donner seine Stimme verliert und das kochende Meer der Wooge des Kornfelds gleicht" (GStA, 3:9). This quotation does not appear in RCC.

51 The Princeton Typescript omits the following parenthetical phrase included in RCC, "(much as the technology of our day tears and destroys)" (135).

52 "Der Rhein," st. 5. "like lightning, he / Must split the earth, and spell-bound / The forests after him flee and collapsing the mountains" (*Hölderlin: His Poems*, 201).

53 The masculine pronouns, "he," "his" and "himself," are crossed out in this clause and the preceding sentence, and are revised by hand to the neuter pronouns, "it," "its" and "itself," in reference to the Rhine. The grammatical gender of the Rhine in German is masculine.

54 RCC continues this sentence with a semicolon and the words "renouncing one's drive to," at which point the fragment ends.

55 "Der Rhein," st. 4. "An enigma are things of pure source" (*Hölderlin: His Poems*, 199).

56 KStA, 5:295.

57 KStA, 5:291-92; *Hölderlins Werke*, 843.

58 *The Antigone of Sophocles*, trans. Fitts and Fitzgerald, 59.

59 KStA, 5:260-61; *Hölderlins Werke*, 824. De Man types "Schosze" for "Schofze." On a loose page of handwritten notes outlining his lecture, de Man transcribes Fitts and Fitzgerald's translation of this passage and notes "p. 824 in H's translation" (de Man,

"Hölderlin" MS). The page number corresponds to the same passage in Brieger's edition of Hölderlin's works.

60 This sentence is partially crossed out and revised by hand. It originally read, "He had the premonition of an experience as specifically Western as Niobe's experience is Greek. This is why he contains the promise of a final reconciliation."

61 The corresponding handwritten pages in the Irvine Manuscript (21-28) begin after this point. The intervening pages between the Irvine Manuscript (1-17) (or RCC 123-36) and the Irvine Manuscript (21-28) remain missing.

62 The translation of *Ungleiches* as "distinctions" suggests that de Man quotes Hamburger's 1952 verse translation (*Hölderlin: His Poems*, 203). In Hamburger's 1961 prose translation, *Ungleiches* is rendered as "inequality" (*Hölderlin: With Plain Prose Translations*, 165).

63 In the Irvine Manuscript (21-28): "pantheistic, pro-Hellenic longing" (p. 21).

64 Crossed out in the Princeton Typescript: "its most familiar aspect is perhaps in the mythology of marxism."

65 In the Irvine Manuscript (21-28): "the source of greatness itself" (p. 21).

66 In the Irvine Manuscript (21-28): "at Rousseau's house before his flight to the lake of Bielle" (p. 21).

67 The words, "identifies him as the guide of the," are inserted by hand above the words "links him closely to the," which are enclosed by hand in square brackets (see fig. 1).

68 "Upon this neck I upheld the sky!" (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 2:17; book 9, line 198).

69 The corresponding paragraph in the Irvine Manuscript (21–28) reads, “It is this aspect of Rousseau related, by analogy with the Rhine, to the pantheistic ideal, that posterity has remembered and that can be called essentially romantic. But, like the Rhine turning to accomplish the full destiny of the West, Rousseau is seen, in a perspective that goes beyond the youthful impulses of the *Treatise on inequality*. It is the Rousseau of the *Rêveries* and of the end of the *Confessions* which is presented in stanza 11, Rousseau after the *Kehre*, as purely Western as Antigone is Greek after her choice for the destiny of Niobé. This new Rousseau is described by a specific mythological allusion: he is said to be the man who has heaped the heaven on his shoulders. The allusion to Herkules is clear, and it is in place here, since Herkules had to carry the sky on his neck (*hac caelum cervice tuli—Ovid*) to [require Atlas to fetch for him] the Golden Apples of the Hesperides, the land of the West and of the evening (*Abendland*). This symbolical action names the essence of Rousseau and forms the core of the poem. [All our remarks have been preliminaries to the interpretation of this image.] [The westward bent of the river Rhine is merely presented as a miraculous act of God, but its equivalence in Rousseau alludes to accessible literary texts]” (p. 22; the square brackets are de Man’s).

70 Hölderlin: *His Poems*, 205.

71 This sentence is partially crossed out and revised by hand. It originally read, “It is founded, however, on a very remarkable passage from the fifth *Rêverie*, which throws a great deal of light on this reading of the late Rousseau as the man who went beyond the romantic tradition.”

72 The emphases in this paragraph and the next are de Man’s. In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28), de Man provides the following translation of this paragraph: “But if there is a state in which the soul finds a foundation strong enough to rest entirely upon, and where to gather its entire being (*rassembler là tout son*

être), without having to recall the past or to encroach upon a future, a state where time does not exist, where the present lasts forever but without any sense of duration or of successiveness, without any feeling of joy or sorrow, of abundance or dearth, of desire or fear, other than that of our sole existence and where it is entirely filled by this feeling; as long as this state persists, the one who experiences it can call himself happy not the imperfect happiness found in the pleasures of life, but the perfect and full happiness which leaves no void that the soul seeks to fill. Such was the state I often experienced in the *île de Saint-Pierre*, during my solitary wanderings, adrift in the boat, seated on the banks of the stormy lake or elsewhere, on the banks of a beautiful river or brook rushing over the gravel” (pp. 23–24). De Man notes “701” above the word “but” at the beginning of the paragraph. “701” corresponds to the page number of this passage in the 1951 *Pléiade* edition of the *Rêveries*, edited by Louis Martin-Chauffier (Rousseau, *Les confessions: Les rêveries*, 701–2).

73 In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28), this sentence appears with the following emphases, “*Nothing outside of oneself*, nothing but *oneself* and one’s own existence” (p. 24).

74 This translation appears to be by de Man.

75 In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28): “romantically misreads” (p. 24).

76 In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28): “narcissistic or auto-erotic” (p. 24).

77 *Les confessions: Les rêveries*, 703. Butterworth translates this passage as, “This kind of reverie can be enjoyed wherever we can be quiet, and I have often thought that in the Bastille—even in a dungeon where no object would strike my sight—I would still have been able to dream pleasantly” (Rousseau, *The Reveries*, 47).

78 The parenthetical remark does not appear in the Irvine Manuscript (21–28).

79 Corrections in de Man's hand render this sentence ungrammatical. Prior to the corrections, it read, "The neo-Hellenic moment, which contains the essence of romanticism, is indispensable in the total experience. . . ." In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28), this sentence reads, "The romantic or neo-Hellenic moment is indispensable in the total experience of the Western mind; it is the very source of this experience" (p. 25).

80 After this point, up to the next paragraph, the paragraph continues in the Irvine Manuscript (21–28): "Shade is the characteristic setting of the West, but attraction towards the 'sun' of nature is at its highest, at the apex of the Eastern, Greek attraction. The fact that the 19th and 20th century critics have read Rousseau and Hölderlin as romantic writers would indicate that they have not gone far enough in their direction. The attributes of a Western art that would be as totally Western as Greek sculpture is Greek can to some extent be imagined by analogy. Thus it is, for instance, that this art would be entirely national but national in a 'naïve' mode. This would make it into the opposite of the romantic nationalism which uses the nation as a myth of pantheistic unity: the way the national theme is used in Whitman, or in Wagner, or in the early Yeats. 'Naïve' nationalism takes the national setting for granted and treats it as an actual presence, not as a value. Moreover, this art would be secular—'weltlich' is the term used by Hölderlin—or rather, it would treat the divine as presence and not as the hidden God of Christianity; as such, it would be historical in the deeper sense, not by being committed to specific temporal causes, but as the *Iliad* is historical in that there no longer is a discrepancy between man's destiny and his acts and enterprises" (p. 26).

81 In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28), this sentence continues, "as in Western art up till now" (p. 27).

82 In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28), the corresponding sentence reads, "Some indication from Hölderlin is the term 'Maass,' which we must take to mean measurement rather than moderation in a moral sense" (p. 27).

83 In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28), a colon replaces the period and the sentence continues with the parenthetical remark, "(you may remember Voltaire's proud statement in *Micromégas* where the visitor from another planet is made aware of man's power, because the little human creature is able to measure his size with Euclidian, Cartesian and Newtonian precision)" (p. 27).

84 In the Irvine Manuscript (21–28): "Kehre" (p. 27).

85 The phrase "Architektonik des Himmels" is from Hölderlin's letter to Leo von Seckendorf on March 12, 1804 (GSStA, 6.1:437). De Man appears to draw upon Heidegger's reading of a poem attributed to Hölderlin, "In lieblicher Bläue" (GSStA, 2.1:372–74). In "... dichterisch wohnet der Mensch . . .," Heidegger discusses Hölderlin's "Architektonik des Himmels" in the context of "Maafß" (199–200).

86 The words "of the 19th century" are crossed out and "after Hölderlin" is inserted by hand. The crossed-out words disambiguate the syntactical function of the names "Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Yeats, George," that is, as an apposition to the phrase "great poets after Hölderlin."

87 The Irvine Manuscript (21–28) reads, "of pure romanticism" (p. 28).

88 Yeats writes "slashes" (*Variorum Edition*, 393).

89 Yeats, "Easter 1916," in *Variorum Edition*, 393.

90 The Irvine Manuscript (21–28) ends here. Its subsequent pages remain missing.

91 Yeats, "A Prayer for my Daughter," in *Variorum Edition*, 403.

Works Cited

- 92 Rimbaud, *Oeuvres complètes*, 125. De Man's syllabus for CL 160 "The Symbolist Movement" in 1957 notes Rolland de Renéville and Jules Mouquet's 1946 edition of Rimbaud's works. For the following translation, the editors consulted Oliver Bernard's prose translation, "Tear" (Rimbaud, *Collected Poems*, 205-6):
- Far from the birds, the herds, the village girls,
I drank, crouched on some heath
Surrounded by soft woods of hazel,
By a warm and green afternoon mist.
- What could I drink from that young Oise,
Elms without voices, turf without flowers, overcast sky.
What did I draw from the colocasia gourd?
Some bland golden liquor, that makes one sweat.
- Like that, I might have been a poor tavern sign.
Then the storm changed the sky, until evening.
There were black lands, lakes, long poles.
Colonnades under the blue night, stations.
- The water from the woods disappeared on
virgin sands,
The wind, from the sky, cast ice upon the ponds . . .
Yet! Like a fisher for gold or for shells,
To think that I did not care to drink!
- Böhm, Wilhelm. *Studien zu Hölderlins Empedokles*. Weimar: R. Wagner Sohn, 1902.
- Croce, Benedetto. "Intorno allo Hölderlin e ai suoi critici." *La Critica* 39, no. 4 (1941): 201-14.
- de Man, Paul. "CL 159, Three Romantic Poets: Keats, Hölderlin, Nerval," TS. Syllabus, Harvard University, Spring 1958. Paul de Man Papers, box 15, folder 8, Special Collections and Archives, University of California Irvine Libraries.
- . "CL 160, The Symbolist Movement," TS. Syllabus, Harvard University, Fall 1957-58. Paul de Man Papers, box 15, folder 6, Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries.
- . "Hölderlin," MS, [c. 1958]. Paul de Man Papers, box 6, folder 1. Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries.
- . "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition." In *Romanticism and Contemporary Criticism: The Gauss Seminar and Other Papers*, edited by E. S. Burt, Kevin Newmark, and Andrzej Warminski, 123-36. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993. [RCC]
- . "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition," MS, [c. 1958]. Paul de Man Papers, box 5, folder 22. Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries. [Irvine Manuscript (1-17)]
- . "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition," MS, [c. 1958] (catalogued as "The Image of Rousseau in the Poetry of Hölderlin: Miscellaneous Notes"). Paul de Man Papers, box 5, folder 17. Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries. [Irvine Manuscript (21-28)]
- . "Hölderlin and the Romantic Tradition," TS, [1959]. *Quarterly Review of Literature Archives*, finding aid C0862, box 31, folder 22, accession number 2005-008. Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library. [Princeton Typescript]

- Eliot, T. S. "The Metaphysical Poets." In *Selected Essays*, 241–50. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *Iphigenie auf Tauris*. In *Goethes Werke*, 1.10:1–95. 269 vols. Weimar: Böhlau, 1887–1919.
- Heidegger, Martin. "... dichterisch wohnet der Mensch ...". In *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 187–204. Pfullingen: Neske, 1954.
- Hölderlin, Friedrich. *Friedensfeier*. Edited by Friedrich Beißner. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1954.
- . *Hölderlin: His Poems*. Translated by Michael Hamburger. New York: Pantheon, 1952.
- . *Hölderlin: With Plain Prose Translations of Each Poem*. Translated and edited by Michael Hamburger. Baltimore: Penguin, 1961.
- . *Hölderlins Werke*. Edited by Anton Brieger. Salzburg: Bergland-Buch, 1952.
- . *Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Norbert von Hellingrath, Friedrich Seebald, and Ludwig von Pigenot. 6 vols. Berlin: Propyläen-Verlag, 1922–23.
- . *Sämtliche Werke: Große Stuttgarter Ausgabe*. Edited by Friedrich Beißner. 8 vols. in 15 parts. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1943–85. [GSStA]
- . *Sämtliche Werke: Kleine Stuttgarter Ausgabe*. Edited by Friedrich Beißner. 6 vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1944–59. [KSStA]
- Lachmann, Eduard, ed. *Der Streit um den Frieden: Beiträge zur Auseinandersetzung um Hölderlins "Friedensfeier"*. Nuremberg: Glock und Lutz, 1957.
- Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Edited and translated by Frank Justus Miller. 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1916.
- Pellegrini, Alessandro. *Friedrich Hölderlin: Sein Bild in der Forschung*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1965.
- . *Hölderlin: Storia della critica*. Florence: Sansoni, 1956.
- Rimbaud, Arthur. *Collected Poems*. Edited and translated by Oliver Bernard. New York: Penguin, 1962.
- . *Oeuvres complètes*. Edited by Rolland de Renéville and Jules Mouquet. Paris: Gallimard, 1946.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Les confessions; Les rêveries du promeneur solitaire*. Edited by Louis Martin-Chauffier. Paris: Gallimard, 1951.
- . *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*. Translated by Charles E. Butterworth. In *The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 8, 1–90. Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000.
- Schiller, Friedrich. "Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung." In *Schillers sämtliche Werke: Säkular-Ausgabe*, edited by Richard Fester et al., 12:161–263. 16 vols. Stuttgart: Cotta, 1904–5.
- Sophocles. *The Antigone of Sophocles*. Translated and edited by Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1939.
- . *Antigone*. In *Antigone, The Women of Trachis, Philoctetes, Oedipus at Colonus*, edited and translated by Hugh Lloyd-Jones. Loeb Classical Library 24, 1–127. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- . *The Antigone*. Vol. 3 of *The Plays and Fragments*. Edited and translated by Richard Jebb. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1888.
- Yeats, William Butler. "Edmund Spenser." In *Essays*, 442–76. New York: Macmillan, 1924.
- . *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*. Edited by Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach. New York: Macmillan, 1957.